

# BRITANNIA:

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A P O E M.

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DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LORD VISCOUNT CAMPERDOWN, &c.

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BY JOHN GORTON.

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*MYSELF, affious, never will surcease  
To guard thy welfare : o'er the swelling deep  
Myself will steer, and will protect thy Fleets.*

Vide, BRITANNIA.

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1797.



TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
ADAM LORD DUNCAN,  
VISCOUNT OF CAMPERDOWN, &c.

MY LORD,

A CTUATED, as I am, by a deep-felt spirit of admiration, for your late truly splendid and heroic conduct, which has been so strongly set forth in the defence and preservation of these kingdoms---while there are so many (and, indeed, while all true Englishmen) in some or other way, express their acknowledgments for so essential a blessing, I should consider myself, in the highest respect ungrateful, if, with an equal degree of animation, I did not feel perfectly sensible of your value ; and of the merit of the brave men, who have this war so conspicuously distinguished themselves ; and have so nobly fought, bled, and triumphed for their Country !

As such a tribute, as the fruits of a few leisure hours—and the effusions of a mind sincerely engrossed by such a principle, you will, I humbly hope, my LORD, disdain not to

## DEDICATION.

accept the following little POEM ; which, albeit, (as I greatly fear) it may not possess any peculiarity to recommend it ; and will, in every point, prove inferior to the praise of such as it would aspire at celebrating---yet, I trust, will, in some measure, have the grandeur of the subject, and the good intentions of its Author to defend its imperfections ; and, poor as it is, should it, my LORD, be so fortunate to meet the honour of your approbation, the world will, I doubt not, (overlooking its faults) for the veneration which it bears to your name, at least, receive it with lenity, and peruse it with candour.

*I have the honour to be,*

*My LORD,*

*With the most unfeigned Respect,*

*Your Lordship's most obedient,*

*Devoted, and humble Servant,*

JOHN GORTON.

BRITANNIA.

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## BRITANNIA.

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HUSH'D was the deep—the waves in slumber slept :—  
No bustling prow disturb'd the ambient main.  
The Sun was sunk—and thro' the tranquil world,  
(Save from the moon a glimmer chequer'd), dark  
Absorb'd the earth, and intervolv'd the sky.

WHEN fair BRITANNIA, from her lucid sea—  
Where rules she solely, and with sceptred sway,  
Bids her bold offspring triumph; and maintai  
Their boasted charter, render'd them by Heav'n—  
Her garment somewhat ruffled, and her mien  
Defac'd with anguish! that, with secret pang,

Prey'd at her bosom—stalk'd majestic forth—  
Majestic stalk'd she to her fallen sons,  
Whose blood, immingled with her foes subdu'd,  
The deep deform'd, to pay the usual tear!  
Not caring, for a while, from all the glare  
And splendour of her glory, to devote  
(As is her way, when such a cause demands)  
An hour obsequious, sacred to the dead

DIFFUSIVE o'er her visage, she sustain'd  
The beam of joy, immingled with regret—  
Joy! for her Isle's success, so lately gain'd—  
Regret! for heroes lost in that success:  
Yet stamp'd her aspect oft a rising smile,  
Which seem'd to publish, that amid the damp,  
Which fallen worth demanded from her eyne,  
A keen invasive spark of gladness, beam'd

Benign,

## BRITANNIA.

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Benign, consolatory to her wish,  
That BRITONS fell like BRITONS!—that her sons,  
Fam'd for cool valour and intrepid deeds,  
Inur'd to toil, and strung to manly feats—  
Undaunted, gen'rous; formidable, free!  
Born to command, and not to be enthrall'd!  
In peace, of gentle manners—stern in war!  
Magnanimous, considerate; possess'd  
Of ev'ry virtue which exalts the brave,  
And makes their name found dreadful to the foe—  
Atchieving, in despight of death, renown!  
Had perish'd as her sons—remarking where  
Their proud antagonists full low display'd  
The victims of their wrath!—and where the corse,  
Who durst dispute with them their native right,  
The empire of the main—disfigur'd stretch'd,  
Lay beaten by the wave: The goddess thus,

While

While unobserv'd, unnoticed by her eye,  
The faithful muse recorded what she spake.

THE dire effects of false ambition, see ;  
Which, with a sudden and delusive gloss  
Of flatt'ring hopes, hath hither led my foes  
Imbitter'd, to imbibe the fatal cup,  
And draw the necessary, nauseous draught  
Which fires my wrath !—and which my arm inflicts !—  
Be such the fate of all who dare usurp  
And arrogate to them, what solely's mine !  
So sudden and destructive be their fall,  
Whose bold audacity would brave, one hour,  
My arm's fell vigor !—whose presumptious thought  
Would, but one minute, doubt my vast domain !

As far as ocean laves his ample flood —  
As far as either pole — as far as day,

His chariot rolling, flings his azure light,  
Unlimited and boundless in its course,  
My sov'reign sway, with unresisted might,  
The wide abyſs ſhall rule ! Where'er the fun,  
(Of this ſtupendous globe the vital lamp,) His poſh'd beam, ſhall o'er the liquid world Shoot magnificent—*there* my potent power, So long eſtabliſh'd with increasing force, And, with ſtill added prowefſ—ſtill ſhall laſt ! Lo, where my little Iſland, ſtrongly wedg'd, And ramparted with rocks, whose flinty baſe Shoots up a promontory to the ſky :— Behold you, where herurdy timber's growth Springs emulous to Heav'n ! Behold you, where My ſplendid Cities in ſucceſſion riſe ; In proud ſucceſſion !—while from ſtreet to ſtreet, Fraught with advantage, buſy commerce flies ; With industry, and all the pleaſing toil

Which

Which both enriches and ennobles man!—

Behold, another Greece, implanted here!

Her arts, her arms, her gallantry the same—

Her love of freedom, and her constant hate

Of what would humble, lessen, or debase.

Survey her happy, and her fruitful soil,

With ev'ry good replenish'd! See where wave

Her plenteous harvests; and where smile her plains—

Behold, unnumber'd flocks with gladness graze—

Behold, unnumber'd oxen break the glebe—

Unnumber'd vegetables deck the ground—

Unnumber'd flow'rs emit a rich perfume—

Unnumber'd beauties, both for use and grace,

For profit and for pleasure, ev'ry where

Profusely grand, and infinitely good,

Exuberantly rise: while o'er the mead,

The jocund swain, his heart expanding, sings

To cheerful labour, and approves his fate.

That

THAT rank contagion, which, with ruthless hate,  
Thy plains hath ravag'd, GALLIA, fruitless here ;  
Where liberty her sway, diffusing wide,  
Hath fix'd, with sure stability, her seat,  
Must ineffectual sicken : all thy arts  
Will but the more expose thee—all thy fraud,  
With juster estimation, here will meet  
The due neglect it merits. When, at first,  
My copious genius, thro' my Britons' breasts,  
The genuine soul of freedom pour'd profuse,  
And taught them to be free—my wisdom then,  
Which actuated all their schemes, matur'd  
And ripen'd all their plots.—The genial flame,  
Which once pervaded Greece, and brighten'd Rome,  
Rekindled hither, with a brighter blaze,  
Glow'd at its height ! at its meridian, then,  
Their staunch deliberations bid it flame ;  
And fix'd its structure with a base so firm,

That

That the rude tooth of all-devouring time  
Might not consume its umpire ! ever since  
Has Britain been what once was ancient Greece—  
And what imperial Rome. Fair science then,  
From whither superstition weigh'd her wings,  
And bore them down despotic—pleas'd to try  
If haply, in some other realm, her voice  
Might more respect command ; her flight resum'd,  
And hither bent she, with my gladden'd sons  
To build her fane ; and hither fix her fway,  
Till the dread dissolution fwallows all.

TRANSCENDENT Isle ! may long thy glories bloom,  
With lasting strength and undiminish'd grace !  
May peace enhance the lustre of thy bliss,  
And war's rude shock but serve to fix more sure  
The basis of thy honor ! May the foe  
Who dare insult thee, shrink beneath thy arm,

Confounded

Confounded and abashed ! with added blaze  
May fame refound thy name to distant realms,  
And fortune add new laurels to thy brow.—

MYSELF, affidious, never will furceafe  
To guard thy welfare : o'er the fwelling deep  
Myself will steer, and will protect thy fleets—  
Triumphant still, thy navies shall subdue  
The pride of GALLIA, and the strength of SPAIN.—  
When ruthleſs war, with unrelenting front,  
Sets bloody rapine loose, and bids their powers,  
With baleful purpose, to supplant thy fway,  
Combine with those of HOLLAND, all their schemes  
Reverted back upon themselves, I'll turn,  
And work their ruin with their own complots !  
Conſpicuous then, my guardian pow'r shall fend  
Thee constant succour, and perpetual aid :—  
And when stern danger ſhall around thee stalk,

And

And ev'ry where envelope thee, my arm—  
Which never fail'd thee—then shall straight command,  
To pluck new bays, and bid fresh glories bloom,  
To deck thy temples, and adorn thy head,  
To honor dear, and dignified, and great,  
**An Howe, a Jervis, and a Duncan rise !**

**AN Howe, a Jervis, and a Duncan, then,**  
Illustrious chiefs ! shall by their prowes high,  
Thy glory perfect, which so long hath dawn'd ;  
And swelling to maturity thy fame,  
Shall bring to full completion. O'er the deep  
A long attending train of gallant feats,  
Shall memorise their name. Their matchless arms  
With so severe, so fierce a stream, shall rage,  
As to annul resistance. When my Howe,  
With all his ardour o'er th' embosom'd main,  
**Invincible, shall dash the power of FRANCE—**

Not less indignant shall my thunder roar,  
When gallant JERVIS humbles that of SPAIN :—  
Or, when triumphant, dauntless DUNCAN, fells,  
At one dire blow, the whole BATAVIAN power !  
By me dictated, See ! where moves my first—  
Infus'd with fortitude, to meet my foe !  
See, where repulses he her boasted power,  
And blasts her latest hopes !—By me inspir'd,  
See where my second, proud IBERIA's force,  
With half the numbers, fearless he assaults,  
And beats resistless—as, when unrestrain'd,  
A torrent loosen'd, bends its furious way,  
And cannot be restricted—lo ! you, where  
His daftard opponents, with dire amaze,  
Stand horribly appall'd. Ignobly vain,  
Rely'd they only on superior force :  
Alone in numbers trusted they their hope—  
But, vain is numbers to true worth oppos'd !

And

And vain the arm whose vigor sloth's unstrung,  
To that confronted, which true courage fires.

By me dictated, genuine courage fires  
My chosen sons, and tracks them up to war.—  
By me dictated, valiant DUNCAN, see—  
Disseminating wide her boasted strength,  
Subdue BATAVIA ! What avails thee there,  
Thy valour, HOLLAND, when superior that  
Which bids thee humble, and which bids thee stoop ?  
Ah ! what thee benefits a brave despair,  
When intrepidity, with coolnes join'd,  
And magnanimous calmnes—bids thee stoop ?  
Lo, where magnificent my heroes sweep,  
And hang, incumbent, o'er the subject sea,  
That owns their trident, and allows their sway.  
Lo, where my ONSLOW and my TROLLOPE wave,  
With dread PELLEW, and with advent'rous SMITH—

Where

Where HOOD, undaunted, subjugates the West ;  
And where my BRIDPORT, fast within her Port  
Locks my adjacent enemy. Lo, where  
My brave St. VINCENT checks the power which once  
His arm had chaftis'd ! Lo, you, ev'ry where,  
Where o'er her regions rolls the chryſtal deep,  
From either Ind to Ethiop's golden shore,  
My Britain's prowefs wander unconfin'd ;  
And unrefiſted, ſubjeſt all the main.

My Britain's prowefs, unabating, ſtill,  
With equal luſtre, and with equal power,  
Secure ſhall laſt : Unlimited, her fway,  
While azure ocean o'er his confine rolls,  
Šhall ſtill be abſolute. When Heav'n conven'd,  
In awfull ſenate met, to fashion fate,  
And to prefix her bounds—important then,  
Invariably her counſel, this refolv'd,

And wrought it in a statute. When in vain,  
To find stability, shall science range,  
With intrepidity, and with the arts—  
And Egypt in her tour—and Greece and Rome  
Shall take successive, after futile toil,  
And various evolutions---when assur'd  
Of her impracticability to rest  
Upon a solid basis—fully tir'd  
Of an unsettled sway and fruitless search ;  
And this determining, again to plunge  
Th' unsettled world in barb'rous dissonance ;  
And to immerse once more within the depth  
From which she extricated, haply then,  
By some good fortune, shall she settle here ;  
And here shall found her empire. Then that peace  
So long which fought she, but without effect,  
No longer hostile to her, nor averse—  
No more shall blast her wishes ; but secure,

Shall

Shall nobly fix her on a sure domain,  
And bid her flourish permanent and great.

To thee indebted, CLARK, thy country owes  
The first great naval tactic, how to break,  
With dread discomfiture and horror dire,  
Her line arrang'd, and discompose the foe ;  
Admiring of that genius, which sublime,  
Breaks unrestricted, over each restraint ;  
And ev'ry petty and embarrass'd case  
Which would deter thy progress ; trusting not  
To formal practice, but itself alone---  
Confiding not in practical surveys,  
But in unaided theory---secure,  
Without research ; and confident, not vain :—  
Thee, first my DUNCAN patronis'd : thee first  
My northern hero, conscious of thy worth,

And of thy patriot principle, which burns  
With unabating ardour---forth conjur'd  
From that obscurity which long had hid  
Thy many latent virtues, may they long  
Remain thy honour, and thy country's boast ;  
And may thy noble patron live to see  
New wreaths implanted from thy matchless art,  
Enhance his glory. But, what glory more  
For him abides ?---full well hath he attain'd  
His height of grandeur ; imitative, let  
New warriors rise, and emulate his acts ;  
And learn from him to conquer : let them still  
Maintain thy law ; with which so well have wrought  
My brave commanders, this my naval war,  
Such feats unequall'd. This, my potent arm,  
Alike if sanguine prove their hopes,

Shall

Shall still conduct them where fresh conquests wait ;  
And with unfading garlands, crown their deeds.

AND ye, who move in one continued sphere  
Of greatness and of grandeur---to whose charge  
Hath Heav'n distributed her choicest gifts,  
With grateful purpose to dispense their good,  
Where worth exacts, and virtue claims a share ;  
Inform'd from hence, how laudable the task  
To seek that solitude where genius pines,  
And call her each perfection forth to light---  
This purpose consummating, bid your search  
Explore where science, unregarded, lies ;  
And where, unnotic'd, genuine merit droops ;  
Assur'd by me, be certify'd, your pains  
Will not be useless : Many a beauteous bud  
Hath in obscurity been left to die !

Which, had your fost'ring patronage approv'd,  
Ere now, to full maturity arriv'd,  
And amply perfected in ev'ry grace,  
Your care had compensated.—Let no more,  
My gen'rous Britons ! *Genius*, my best friend,  
By you be slighted !—learn to vindicate  
And estimate her virtues : When she eyes  
Your equal ardour at the genial flame,  
Her hidden excellence—till then immur'd  
In deep oblivion—with more copious views,  
Will straight enlarge ; and, with an ampler scope,  
Will beam magnificent, and full and clear.

PRESUMPTUOUS GALLIA ! where are now thy threats,  
Which, giant like, so dread an aspect bore ;  
And which so lately, so horrific glar'd ?—  
Dispers'd and scatter'd are they, as thy fleet;

Which

Which durst, ill-fa:ed, where HIBERNIA boasts  
Her loyal sons, provoke my wrath arous'd,  
And blow my keen resentment into rage !  
Ignobly proud, and insolently vain !  
Elate in thought, in execution poor---  
In words high-swelling, but in deeds deject---  
Bombastic, changeful---miserable, frail :---  
Fond of new projects---destitute of means  
To put them into practice---firm in plan,  
But impotent in act :---with this, this hour  
Pleas'd, past idea ! forfeited the next !---  
An Hydra-headed monster, to whose taste  
No form of rule, for three successive days,  
Is palatably fix'd.---Irresolute ;  
Pleas'd with false fire, and fond of false pretexts.---  
How could'st thou, GALLIA, hope to taint my sons ;  
And, by invading, teach them to revolt  
From all their dearer privileges ! How,

When pure inartificial reason, bids  
My gallant Britons lavish all their blood,  
For which their ancestors, through many an age,  
Unwearied labour'd, and undaunted bled !  
Unprecedented ! durst thy arrogance  
Presume, but for an instant, to divert  
The Sons of Freedom from her sacred shrine,  
And hold a bait to lure them from their rights !

How durst thou, GALLIA ! hope to taint my sons ;  
When, for a full assurance they possess  
That liberty they boast. Your view you need  
No further cast, than where my GEORGE presides ;  
In ev'ry regal dignity array'd,  
And clad munificent, with ev'ry grace.  
In him, their monarch, energetic fee  
All excellence concentrated : up to him,  
As to their common fire, his people look ;

As conscious of his virtues :---highly lov'd  
By Heav'n and by his people---truly great,  
And liberally good---possess'd of that  
Which both endears, and renders him endear'd :  
Benevolent, and open and sincere ;  
And affable and frank---the friend of worth,  
The scourge of falsehood, and the bane of vice :---  
Succinctly view in him, at once, the friend,  
The father, and the patriot---that he lacks  
Which throws a sultry o'er the human breast;  
And that possesses only which displays  
An heart which streams with pure benevolence ;  
And in its boundless circuit, flows to all.

With fertilizing stream, his graces still  
Diffusive shall be pour'd : from him, their head,  
The fount of all their treasures, copious down,  
In one glad torrent rushing, shall be roll'd,

The

The tide of bliss impetuous ; form'd by him,  
And by his precepts, to superior deeds,  
That sure reward, which is the meed of worth,  
And ever waits on virtue, shall attend  
An imitative people ; never yet  
Has fail'd the sequel ; and it never shall ;  
But more impressive, with a stronger ebb,  
And one compulsive current, still shall flow ;  
As firmer grows their energy and fire,  
The lasting source of inexhausted good.

Oh, Peace ! thou first of blessings, and thou chief ;  
Whose task benificent, it is to sooth  
The rage of war ; and bid, where anger glow'd,  
Long time resentful, thy endearing tie  
Calm the wild whirlwind of a captious wrath,  
And stay the tempest of a rooted hate ! —  
Advance ! thou best of nymphs ! from where too long

Thy

Thy vivid beam is hid---posseſſ'd of thee,  
What tides of wealth, unebbing, ſhould not roll  
To bleſſ my Britain! What unnumber'd fleets,  
For her their streamers curling, ſhould not fail:  
What ports to her ſhould not unlock the means  
Of yielding her abundance? O'er the main,  
What power is that from which ſhe ſhould not claim  
A due obedience? Where is ſituate,  
Remote or near, the region whic̄h ſhould not  
Be iſtrumental in ſome new ſupplies,  
To raife her traffic, and ſecure her power?

ADVANCE! thou beſt of nymphs! from where too long  
Thy vivid beam is hid. No longer coy,  
Permit, fair Goddess, rude ungentle war,  
Thy ſceptre to uſurp: thy ſmile again,  
Where frowns contention, placably reſume;  
And chafe each foul and fullea miſt away,

That

That would obscure thy visage—thro' the world,  
Once more, mild form ! thy gentle rule display—  
And bid, where rugged, and where brutal arms  
Too long, hath undistinguish'd, levell'd man,  
Preside thy soothng and endearing arts.

HAIL ! happy, and all hail, propitious hour,  
When peace alone, shall universal sway,  
And war shall be no more !—when man to man,  
Fair concord breathing, and unruffled love,  
Shall banish from the world, th' unsocial blast  
That kindles war ; and, propagating wrath,  
Commands rude discord and uncultur'd rage,  
To range revengeful ! Welcome, halcyon day !  
When all the nations, with a solemn tie,  
Thy gen'ral genial influence shall cheer,  
And hold it sacred by a common vow—  
Where they the smallest vestage shall survey,

To

To threat thy mild dominion—with one voice,  
Resentful, to repulse th' envenom'd plague,  
And check the rising mischief.—Happy years !  
What blis encircling, shall revolve ye round,  
When but one unanimity shall bless,  
And one unbias'd suffrage reach to all.

FOR these my sons, whose blood ennobled stains  
Where aged ocean laves his ancient flood,  
And rolls his waves majestic—tho' the tear  
Be virtue's meed, and due to fallen worth—  
And tho' they've had a dear and just revenge,  
Unconquer'd still, their purer part shall mount,  
With former heroes to maintain their share ;  
And live, enraptur'd, with unfading bliss,  
And bask in consummate and ceaseless joy !—  
There dauntless FAULKNER and my HERVEY, there,  
With many others more, shall join the band—

Who,

Who, like themselves, thro' many a distant age,  
Where honor and their country's weal requir'd,  
Had combated and bled! My BURGESS, there  
Illustrious, shall be tender'd to the train,  
And infinitely meet with due applause :—  
And when new wars, by captious neighbours fed,  
Shall threat my Britain, then my gallant chiefs  
Who fell in this—delighting to survey  
Their country's welfare, which themselves had nurs'd—  
And pleas'd to draw them from their joys awhile,  
To yield her their protection—still shall fire  
My youth, with sentiments their bosom felt ;  
And with that courage, with the which they wrought  
Such deeds unparallel'd—their spirit still,  
Which freedom dictated—shall actuate,  
And with contagious force, from age to age---  
The lasting pledge of unremitting good—

Shall

## BRITANNIA.

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Shall arbitrary roll, from fire to son,  
Till Sol shall rise, and time shall be no more !

THIS said—the Goddess and her airy train  
Sunk from the view ; and nought was to be seen  
But the grey twilight, breaking in the East—  
And nought distinguish'd, was to be observ'd,  
Save the rude clamour of the sounding wave.

FINIS.

